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Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Parties to Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons begin 1995 Review and Extension Conference; Secretary-General urges end to testing, production, sale and transfer of nuclear weapons.

+ Security Council authorizes States to import up to $1 billion worth of Iraqi petroleum every 90 days to meet humanitarian needs in Iraq.

+ Snipers kill two French peace-keepers and local UNPROFOR staff member in Sarajevo over weekend; Security Council condemns deliberate targeting of United Nations personnel and invites Secretary-General to investigate incidents.

+ United Nations and OAS hold Third General Meeting at Headquarters; Secretaries-General note cooperation between two Organizations in Haiti.

+ Secretary-General says progress in Rwanda is threatened by renewed tensions; refugees and displaced persons must be encouraged to return home; Special Representative to consider possible adjustments to UNAMIR mandate.

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The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) began today at Headquarters. The four-week Conference will review the implementation of the Treaty, which entered into force in 1970, and decide whether it should be extended indefinitely or for a fixed period or periods. Today's meeting began with the election of Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala (Sri Lanka) as Chairman of the Conference.

In his inaugural address, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said the world had become, in many ways, a safer place over the past 25 years. The number of parties to the NPT had grown steadily to 178, and universality was within reach. However, there were also increasing dangers. Some States were

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seeking to manufacture weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, at a time when the world was beset by ethnic tension. There was also a risk of such weapons falling into the hands of non-State terrorist groups.

The Secretary-General stressed the need to enhance security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States through cooperative security arrangements, to advance nuclear disarmament, and to address concerns regarding access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. "The most safe, sure and swift way to deal with the threat of nuclear arms is to do away with them in every regard", he went on to say. "This should be our vision of the future. No more testing. No more production. No more sales or transfers".

Speaking on behalf of the host country, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said the NPT embodied the guiding principles of the United Nations and was one of the most important treaties of all time. Many of its achievements could not be quantified -- the weapons not built, the nuclear materials not diverted, and the wars not started -- but its tangible results were impressive. The purpose of the NPT was to preserve the security of all, not the nuclear-weapons monopoly of a few. That security must be constantly reinforced. "For all nations and all peoples, the future of the NPT will be even more important than its past", he concluded.

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The Security Council has authorized States to permit the import of up to $1 billion worth of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products every 90 days to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. The Council also authorized Turkey to permit the import of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products to meet tariff charges for their transport through the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline. It took that action on Friday, by unanimously adopting resolution 986 (1995) under Chapter VII of the Charter.

Purchases of Iraqi petroleum under the resolution will be approved and supervised by the Council Committee which monitors sanctions against Iraq. The full amount of each purchase will be deposited directly by the purchaser into an escrow account to be established by the Secretary-General. The funds will finance the export to Iraq of medicine, health supplies, foodstuffs and essential materials, provided that the export is at the request of Iraq and that the country effectively guarantees their equitable distribution. A percentage will be transferred to the Compensation Fund dealing with claims resulting from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

In a statement issued on Friday, the Secretary-General welcomed the adoption of resolution 986 (1995), which he hoped would be a first step towards overcoming the crisis between Iraq and the international community. However, he expressed regret today at Iraq's response to the resolution as reported by the international media. He expressed the hope that the Iraqi Government would reconsider its position.

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Two French peace-keepers and a local staff member of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were killed by sniper fire in Sarajevo over the weekend, according to a spokesman for the Organization. He said that the incidents were being intensively investigated, and that the source, or sources, of the firing had not yet been determined.

In a Presidential statement on Friday, the Security Council strongly condemned the deliberate targeting of UNPROFOR personnel, which reflected the overall deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It invited the Secretary-General to investigate those acts, and to report to it, taking into consideration the views of troop-contributing countries, on any measures which might be necessary to prevent further attacks, which should not remain unpunished.

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The Third General Meeting of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) began today at Headquarters. In an opening address, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said he had constantly sought to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The international community was threatened as never before, and responsibilities must be shared. States faced challenges from above -- such as threats to the environment, transnational crime and pandemics -- and challenges from below -- such as social disintegration, poverty and unemployment.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said he saw the role of the OAS as concentrating on three specific areas: preventive diplomacy, peace-making and peace-building. He stressed the importance of peace-building, which required creating a culture of democracy, organizing and monitoring elections, and reforming and reinforcing key institutions. He also called attention to the level of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAS in Haiti.

The Secretary General of the OAS, Cesar Gaviria, paid tribute to Mr. Boutros-Ghali for his key role in supporting the restoration of democracy in Haiti. The international community, especially in the Americas, deeply appreciated his initiatives to promote freedom, respect for human rights, and development in that country. Mr. Gaviria described the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) as an outstanding example of collaboration between the OAS and the United Nations.

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The progress achieved in Rwanda over the past nine months is threatened by renewed tensions, according to the Secretary-General. In a report dated 9 April, he said the Government and the international community must put the country back on the road to stability, reconciliation and reconstruction. Those goals would remain elusive as long as two million Rwandese remained in camps outside the country. The Government must make more determined efforts

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to foster a climate of trust and confidence, and to create conditions that would encourage refugees and displaced persons not suspected of involvement in last year's genocide to return home. At the same time, steps must be taken to bring those guilty of genocide to trial as soon as possible.

The Government could not by itself address all the problems facing Rwanda, he continued. It needed the assistance and cooperation of its neighbours and the international community. He urged donors to accelerate the flow of aid to Rwanda, noting that the Trust Fund for the country could disburse assistance quickly and effectively. He expressed concern about the increasing harassment of United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) personnel, and urged the Government to extend the cooperation necessary for the Mission to carry out its mandate.

Senior Rwandese officials had pointed out that the situation in their country had changed, and that UNAMIR's mandate and role should be reviewed, the Secretary-General noted. He had therefore asked his Special Representative to consider, in consultation with the Government, possible adjustments to the Mission's mandate, which would expire on 9 June. Based on his advice, the Secretary-General would submit recommendations on the future role of the Mission in the next report to the Council.

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